

**A. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this practice is to benefit aquatic wildlife species by establishing a vegetative cover of grasses/forbs that will filter sediment, nutrients, or other potential contaminants and provide food and cover for terrestrial wildlife.

**B. PROGRAM POLICY**

Apply this practice to cropland and pasture and hay land immediately adjacent and parallel to:

1. Streams having perennial flow.
2. Seasonal streams, excluding gullies and sod waterways.
3. Sinkholes, karst areas, and other ground water recharge areas.
4. Wetlands permanently or semi-permanently inundated with surface water.

**C. ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible for cost share, this practice shall:

- Improve wildlife habitat benefits to an acceptable level.
- Prevent degradation of environmental benefits from recurring.
- Be maintained for the expected lifespan of the practice.
- Be included in the approved Wildlife Habitat Development Plan.
- Meet the following conditions for crop and pasture fields where a buffer area (woods or grassland) already exists between the water body and the cropland/pasture, the following applies:
  - Where existing buffer is not adequate for obtaining the wildlife or aquatic resource objectives of the Wildlife Habitat Development Plan, an additional buffer may be established up to a total width of 120 feet.

**D. COST-SHARE POLICY**

Eligible practice components for this practice shall be determined needed by NRCS and specified in an approved Wildlife Habitat Development Plan (WHDP). This practice shall be cost shared at a rate to meet the minimal needs of the NRCS Wildlife Habitat Development Plan.

Eligible Components

Minerals  
Eligible Seed  
Seedbed Preparation  
Seeding  
Herbicide Application

## Temporary Cover

Temporary cover will be eligible under one of the following conditions: (a) determined needed until required seeds or plant stock is available; (b) needed because normal planting period for the species has passed and erosion problems may occur; (c) needed because of a soil condition such as chemical residue that will not allow establishment of cover immediately; and (d) on sites subject to erosion where natural regeneration will be the established cover (B slopes, areas subject to scour erosion).

## E. REQUIREMENTS

The following are requirements for this practice.

1. Filter strips shall be a minimum of 20 feet and a maximum of 120 feet.
2. The seeded area shall not be grazed by domestic livestock for the life of the Long-Term contract. Native warm season grass stands may be harvested once per year, beginning with the third growing season. Native warm season grass stands may only be harvested between July 1 and August 15.
3. Practice shall reduce nutrients, sediment, organic matter, pesticides, and other pollutants that are being delivered to receiving waters.
4. Chemicals used in performing the practice must be:
  - a. Federally, State, and locally registered.
  - b. Applied according to authorized registered uses, directions on the label, and other Federal or State policies and requirements.
5. A current soil test is required for all permanent herbaceous plantings. Lime and fertilizer are NOT required for trees, shrubs, or temporary cover.

## F. PLANTING TIMESPAN

Planting or sowing after the WHIP Long-Term contract is approved by the NRCS Contracting Officer (Area Conservationist) shall be completed as scheduled in the Wildlife Habitat Development Plan, unless the producer can provide acceptable documentation that seed stock is not available.

## G. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

Consider other resources and environmental concerns (e.g., cultural, wetlands, etc.) as prescribed by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other applicable laws and regulations when establishing this practice. A TN-CPA-25 must be completed for each WHDP.

## H. PRACTICE MAINTENANCE

This practice shall be maintained without additional Federal cost share for the expected lifespan of the practice. Cost share shall be refunded if either of the following applies:

1. Participant destroys the cover during its lifespan; or
2. Cover fails to provide the desired wildlife benefits during the life of the WHIP contract, unless the failure is caused by circumstances beyond the participant's control.

#### I. TECHNICAL RESPONSIBILITY

NRCS shall have technical responsibility for this practice.

#### J. SPECIFICATIONS

Approved Cover	<p>Natural regeneration is acceptable on soils with 0-2 percent slopes. With natural regeneration, cost sharing shall be available for tame grass eradication, temporary cover, or legume interseeding. Substitutions may be allowed subject to prior approval by the WHIP Program Leader or State Biologist.</p> <p>For temporary cover (corn) with eastern gamagrass, plant corn at a 45-degree angle to the eastern gamagrass rows. Corn should be no-tilled. Plant 10 pounds eastern gamagrass about April 1. Apply atrazine for corn, following label directions. Plant early maturing corn about June 1 at a rate of 12,000-16,000 (1/7 bu./ac.) plants per acre. Harvest corn as early as possible.</p>
Requirements	<p>Temporary cover is authorized. Corn is authorized as a temporary cover for eastern gamagrass only.</p> <p>A current soil test is required for all permanent herbaceous plantings. Lime and fertilizer are NOT required for trees, shrubs, or temporary cover.</p>
Seedbed	<p>For conventionally planted materials, a firm seedbed is recommended. Prepare by plowing and disking (or harrowing) and allowed to settle. Prescribed burning (WHIP 10) may be used as a component for site preparation.</p>
Herbicides	<p>Apply herbicides in accordance with the label for tame grass eradication or when the no-till method of planting is used.</p>

<b><u>Eligible Seeds or Plants</u></b>	<b><u>Seeding Rates (per acre)</u></b>	<b><u>Seeding Dates</u></b>
Natural Regeneration	Temporary Cover, if needed	See Temporary Cover below.
Natural Regeneration with Legume Interseeding		
Kobe/Korean Lespedeza	15.0 lbs.	Apr. 15-June 15
Eastern Gamagrass	10.0 lbs.	Dec. 1-July 1*
No-till Corn (Temporary Cover)	1/7 bushel (12,000-16,000 corn plants/acre)	

#### **Tall Grass Mixture (Deer/Turkey)**

Big Bluestem	1.0 lb. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$ )	Dec. 1-July 1
Indiangrass	1.0 lb. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$ )	
Little Bluestem	1.0 lb. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$ )	
Sideoats Grama	1.0 lb. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$ )	
Switchgrass	0.5 lb. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$ )	
Kobe/Korean Lespedeza	5.0 lbs.	
or		
Single or Mix of	1.0 lb.	
Illinois Bundleflower		
Partridge Pea		

#### **Short Grass Mixture (Quail/Rabbit)**

Little Bluestem	3.0 lbs. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$ )	Dec. 1-July 1
Indiangrass	0.5 lb. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$ )	
Sideoats Grama	1.0 lb. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$ )	
Kobe/Korean Lespedeza	5.0 lbs.	
or		
Single or Mix of	1.0 lb.	
Illinois Bundleflower		
Partridge Pea		

#### **Broadcast Planting Mixture**

Switchgrass	8.0 lbs. (PLS $\frac{1}{2}$ )	Apr. 1-July 1
(Cave-in-Rock, Blackwell)		
Kobe/Korean Lespedeza	5.0 lbs.	

#### **Temporary Cover – Summer**

Millet, White Proso	20.0 lbs.	May 1-July 1
Millet, Foxtail	20.0 lbs.	May 1-July 1
Buckwheat	30.0 lbs.	May 1-Aug. 1
Corn (with Eastern Gamagrass Only)	12,000-16,000 plants/acre	June 1

<u>Eligible Seeds</u> <u>or Plants</u>	<u>Seeding Rates</u> <u>(per acre)</u>	<u>Seeding Dates</u>
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**Temporary Cover – Winter**

Crimson Clover	20.0 lbs.	Aug. 1-Oct. 1
Winter wheat	1.5-2 bushels	Sept. 1-Oct. 20
Cereal Rye	1.5-2 bushels	Sept. 1-Oct. 20
Wheat and Crimson Clover	1 bushel; 10 lbs.	Sept. 1-Oct. 20
Rye and Crimson Clover	1 bushel; 10 lbs.	Sept. 1-Oct. 20

1/ PLS = Pure Live Seed

\* See “Approved Cover” Above